EPA
United States
Environmental Protection
Agency

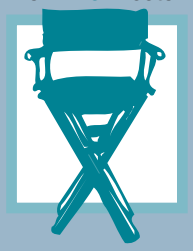
Partners In Progress

EPA Update on Federal Facility Cleanup and Reuse

Issue 6
February 2002

FFRRO Partner Interactions Remain Strong

FromTheDirector



Welcome to the sixth issue of *Partners in Progress* (PIP), a newsletter from EPA's Federal Facilities Restoration and Reuse Office (FFRRO).

In this issue we highlight exemplary stakeholder interactions, communication breakthroughs, and several innovative meetings and workshops. These stories and more show progress being made across a range of issues surrounding federal facility closure and cleanup.

As stated in our mission, FFRRO believes that maintaining positive partnerships is one of the most important elements for keeping remediation at federal facilities on track. In this issue, we feature a historic partnership between EPA, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, and the Nansemond Tribe. Working together, these agencies forged an agreement that will protect artifacts from an ancient tribal burial site unearthed while cleaning up a Formerly Used Defense Site (FUDS).

Even when partner discussions on federal facility issues create conflict, we are working to keep open the lines of communication. At the former Joliet Army Ammunition Plant in Illinois, a diverse group of stakeholders used a facilitator's conflict resolution and team-building exercises to help bring a controversial issue back into focus.

At Fort Devens, Massachusetts, it took a single concerned resident to bring community involvement to the forefront of cleanup procedures. EPA is proud to honor community activist Laurie Nehring with the 2001 Citizen's Excellence in Community Involvement Award.

<Continued on Page 3>

The Power of One—EPA Honors a Citizen's Contributions

TheCommunity Connection

Take a contaminated military base near a small town, add concerned government entities, and throw in an involved citizen's group. These are common ingredients at a federal facility cleanup, but the story of environmental remediation at Fort Devens, Massachusetts, and the role of local community activist Laurie Nehring is an example of one resident's uncommon determination to make a difference. That's why EPA honored Nehring with the 2001 national Citizen's Excellence in Community Involvement Award.

"Laurie was a breath of fresh air," says Jim Byrne, EPA's remedial project manager for Fort Devens from 1990 to 1999. "She got so many people interested and involved. She served the residents who will be left to live with whatever we do at the site, and she increased

<Continued on Page 8>

Joliet Army Ammunition Plant: Facilitating Progress

Celebrating Success

Given the diverse issues and stakeholders involved in a federal facility cleanup, what can agencies do when cleanup discussions reach an impasse? When faced with this dilemma, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) hired a facilitator to help resolve conflict over cleanup at an Illinois Superfund site. The facilitator's team-building and conflict resolution exercises not only helped re-establish talks on appropriate cleanup levels, they also helped a group of diverse representatives explore and understand one another's personal and professional points of view.

The Joliet Army Ammunition Plant in Will County, Illinois, was active from 1940 to 1976. The plant is split into two sites: the load-assembly-packing area and the manufacturing area. The load-assembly-packing area was used to put the finishing touches on high-explosive artillery shells, bombs, mines, and small arms ammunition, as well as to test ammunition, wash and renovate shells, and burn and demolish explosives.

At the manufacturing area, more than four billion pounds of explosives—primarily trinitrotoluene (TNT)—were made and stored.

The manufacturing area was placed on EPA's Superfund National Priorities List in 1987, followed by

<Continued on Page 10>

Acronyms Explained

ASTSWMO	Association of State and Territorial Solid Waste Management Officials
BRAC	Base Realignment and Closure
DoD	U.S. Department of Defense
DOE	U.S. Department of Energy
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
FFRRO	Federal Facilities Restoration and Reuse Office
FUDS	Formerly Used Defense Sites
ICMA	International City/County Management Association
NCP	National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan
NPL	National Priorities List
PCB	Poly-chlorinated biphenyl
QAPP	Quality Assurance Project Plan
RCRA	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act
ROD	Record of Decision
STGWG	State & Tribal Government Working Group
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture

Partners In Progress Philosophy

Stakeholders involved in federal facility cleanups are diverse, with differing backgrounds, interests, and perspectives. All of these stakeholders, however, share a single common goal—progress. *Partners In Progress* (*PIP*) provides an open forum for stakeholders to exchange information, offer solutions, and share stories about what works and what doesn't. We encourage you—our readers—to write to us about your activities that foster teamwork, promote innovation, and strengthen community involvement. Only by working together can we achieve "federal cleanups that put citizens first."

Solid Waste and Emergency Response (5106)
EPA505-B-02-001
February 2002
www.epa.gov/swerffrr/

From the Director

<Continued From Page 1>

Sharing ideas and information is a key component in forming good partnerships, and we have a number of meeting summaries and documents to share that address federal facility issues. In this issue you will read about the updated *Comprehensive Five-Year Review Guidance*, new reports on cleanup regulations at U.S. Department of Energy sites, a draft policy for Quality Assurance Project Plans, and the first-ever Federal Facility Managers Symposium. You will also find a recently updated list of appropriate U.S. Department of Defense contacts dealing with federal facility cleanups.

As we enter 2002, we hope to continue sharing with you the solutions and successes forged by good partnerships. We welcome your comments, questions, and suggestions. For more information, visit us on the Web at <www.epa.gov/swerffrr>. PIP

—James Woolford, FFRRO Director

Protecting the Future and Uncovering the Past

Fragments of historic human bone and tooth are not typical discoveries in the cleanup of a Formerly Used Defense Site (FUDS). But the former Nansemond Ordnance Depot, near Suffolk, Virginia—once a tribal meeting place—is not a typical FUDS. In a unique case of stakeholder involvement, EPA, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, and the Nansemond Tribe have signed an agreement ensuring that remediation activities protect tribal interests, artifacts, and history.

"Thanks to this agreement, we are all now paying attention to the cultural and historical significance of this site, which we might not have recognized before," says Rob Thomson, the remedial project manager from EPA Region 3.

The site occupied by the former depot encompasses the convergence point of the Nansemond and James Rivers. In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, it was a meeting place for the Nansemond Tribe, one of the remaining Powhatan Confederacy tribes officially recognized by the Commonwealth of Virginia and the state's General Assembly. The Nansemond Tribe's long history of relocation eventually led it away from the site, which, in 1917, became home to an Army ordnance depot. Used for storing and shipping various types of munitions during World War I and II, the depot was closed in the 1960s. Areas of the site where contamination does not threaten human health now host a community college, General Electric facilities, and various other private companies.

Nansemond's past military operations resulted in contamination from metals, explosives, unexploded ordnance, petroleum products, and industrial solvents. Placed on EPA's National Priority List in 1999, Nansemond's six major source areas have been removed, and 20 other areas of concern have been identified.

During the cleanup procedures, a human burial site was discovered near a landfill along the James River beachfront. After careful excavation and Nansemond tribal approval, the remains were removed for further study at nearby Radford University. In response to this exciting archeological find, and in anticipation of other discoveries, EPA recognized the need for a new kind of stakeholder involvement at the Nansemond site. The agreement, made possible through the National Historic Preservation Act, was signed in May 2000. According to Thomson, it lays the foundation for a culturally sensitive, cautious approach to cleanup.

"We now have an archeological plan in place. If a site is found, it must be excavated by a professional archeologist to determine its historical and cultural significance," he says. If the site is determined to be significant, a plan to avoid or minimize disturbance is prepared in consultation with archeologists, the Nansemond Tribe, and the State Historic Preservation Officer. In addition, Nansemond tribal member Fred Bright now retains a permanent seat on the Restoration Advisory Board for the site.

"I had never experienced anything like this. I think it's very important for other remedial project managers to recognize that the possibility of finding culturally or historically significant artifacts exists," Thomson says. "They should understand the importance of including all interested parties as soon as possible, so that everyone has a voice and gets on board."

The Nansemond agreement is a testament to EPA's commitment to involve and hear all communities with ties to a Superfund site, whether in this century or those past. PIP

While removing contaminants such as unexploded ordnance (pictured), excavators at the Nansemond site in Virginia took special care to preserve historic artifacts found on site.

News Briefs

Comprehensive Five-Year Review Guidance Available

The 2001 update of the *Comprehensive Five-Year Review Guidance* is now available on EPA's Superfund Web site (www.epa.gov/superfund/resources/5year/index.htm). This guidance is intended to promote consistent five-year reviews of cleanup remedies at sites.

The Superfund regulations require a five-year review when remedial actions leave hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants on-site. The National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (NCP) also requires a five-year review of remedial actions where contaminants are left in place at levels that limit use or restrict exposure.

The five-year review requirement applies to all remedial actions selected under Superfund. Like private facilities, federal agencies are responsible for ensuring that five-year reviews are conducted at sites where they are required or appropriate. The guidance is designed to:

- Provide an approach for conducting five-year reviews.
- Facilitate consistency across the 10 EPA Regions.
- Clarify current policy.
- Discuss roles and responsibilities of various entities in conducting or supporting five-year reviews.

The document also can be accessed from the FFRRO Web site at <www.epa.gov/swerffrr/whatsnew.htm>. PIP

STGWG Releases FY 2001 Annual Report

In October 2001, the State & Tribal Government Working Group (STGWG) released its Fiscal Year 2001 Annual Report, which highlights activities during the past year. STGWG is a group of tribes, states, and associations appointed by the Secretary of Energy to help ensure that U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) facilities and sites are operated and cleaned up in compliance with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

STGWG's Stewardship Committee also released four interim reports on initiatives related to environmental cleanups at federal facilities:

- **Information Management for Long-Term Stewardship**
  The committee conducted a survey of working group members to determine the scope of state and tribal information needs for long-term stewardship at DOE nuclear sites where contamination will remain. The committee found that data on remedial actions and location and inventory of contamination and wastes were the most important types of information needed. It also found that confirming effectiveness of a remedy and correcting or compensating for failure were the most important purposes for information. The committee will follow up its research by finding out how information is gathered, managed, and made accessible, and how to best conduct long-term information management.
- **Classified Wastes**
  The committee conducted a survey of working group members to determine the level of interest in classified waste disposal and its effect on long-term stewardship. Based on survey responses, STGWG will submit a document to DOE with its survey results and a request that DOE conduct its own survey on classified waste. STGWG hopes that DOE's findings will offer an acceptable path forward.
- **DOE Land Transfers**
  The committee conducted a survey of working group members to determine the effectiveness of DOE policies regarding transfer of facilities or properties to other agencies. The survey and follow-up investigations revealed five problems with DOE policies, including confusion about transfer terms and role definition, inconsistent terminology and processes, difficulty accessing transfer information, confusion about federal agency ownership of a site, and confusion about long-term controls. The committee provides background on its research methods, as well as several recommendations.
- **DOE Long-Term Cost Estimation**
  The committee began research into the economics and cost-estimating procedures for long-term cleanup remedies at DOE sites. Initial findings indicate that present cost comparison tools are not optimal and that optional methods should be evaluated. The committee has made several recommendations for continued research into new cost-estimating tools, and vows to work with DOE and others to establish the necessary funding and support.

For more information on STGWG and its involvement in DOE site cleanups, visit the group's Web site at <www.em.doe.gov/stgwg>. PIP

Whom to See in the DoD

You can contact the following DoD employees in the Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Installations and Environment) with questions about federal facilities cleanups:

- **Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Installations and Environment)**
  Raymond F. DuBois
  703 695-2880
- **Principal Assistant Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Installations and Environment)**
  Philip Grone
  703 697-9107
- **Assistant Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Environment)**
  John P. Woodley
  703 697-7413
- **Cleanup**
  Kurt Kratz
  703 697-5372
- **Unexploded Ordnance**
  Col. John Selstrom, U.S. Air Force
  703 695-5297
- **Environmental Quality**
  Kevin Doxey
  703 604-1885
- **Program Integration**
  Patrick Meehan
  703 695-7957
- **Housing and Energy**
  Peter J. Potochney
  703 614-5356
- **Safety and Occupational Health**
  Curtis Bowling
  703 604-1624
- **Explosive Safety Board**
  Capt. Bill Wright, U.S. Navy
  703 325-0891

Comments Sought on Policy for Quality Assurance Project Plans

As part of an ongoing, interagency effort to improve the way the federal government collects and manages environmental data, EPA is reviewing comments on a draft policy on Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPPs). An interagency data quality task force that includes the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD), U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), and EPA developed this policy, a workbook, and QAPP example for review. EPA has requested formal comment on the documents before each agency issues a policy directive for future QAPPs.

QAPPs are plans that EPA requires in any type of environmental data collection project—from Superfund site remediation, to general environmental compliance, to long-term stewardship efforts. EPA has been working with DoD and DOE on the interagency task force since 1997 to develop a Uniform Federal Policy for Implementing Environmental Quality Systems, in response to concerns over the quality of data used in Superfund decision-making (see *Partners in Progress* Issue #5). These efforts are coordinated agency-wide by EPA's Office of Environmental Information, which has central responsibility for EPA's information management, policy, and technology.

"The Quality Assurance Project Plans are used to provide a baseline and information on how you're collecting data and monitoring the site," says FFRRO's Mike Carter, who serves on the task force. In addition to being consistent with EPA's requirements, the draft policy reflects the consensus-driven American National Standards Institute/American Society for Quality Control (ANSI/ASQC) E-4 Standard.

The deadline for comments is April 30, 2002. Those interested in reviewing the draft Interagency Data Quality Task Force Policy, QAPP example, and workbook can find these documents online at <http://www.epa.gov/swerffrr/data_quality/reviewqapp.htm>. For additional information on EPA's QAPP requirements, see <http://www.epa.gov/quality1/qs-docs/r5-final.pdf>, or contact Mike Carter at 202 260-5686 or <carter.mike@epa.gov>. PIP

Two Federal Facilities Make 2001 Cons

In 2001, Loring Air Force Base in Maine and Aberdeen Proving Ground in Maryland made the Superfund construction completion list. A construction completion site is a former toxic waste site where physical construction of all cleanup actions is complete, all immediate threats have been addressed, and all long-term threats are under control. Construction completion of a site is a significant benchmark in the cleanup process. It means contaminants are no longer threatening the health and well-being of the surrounding community or spreading uncontrolled through the soil, air, surface water, or groundwater. It also means that, even though long-term cleanup actions may still be operating, the site is usually ready to be reused for economic, social, or environmental purposes.

Loring Air Force Base, Maine

Loring Air Force Base—located in Aroostook County, Maine, near the towns of Connor, Caswell, Caribou, and Limestone—operated as an active military installation beginning in 1952. The 9,000-acre base was used to maintain a combat-ready force capable of long-range bombardment operations. Various quantities of fuels, oils, lubricants, solvents, and protective coatings were released into the surrounding environment. Surface water, soils, and sediments were contaminated with volatile organic compounds, poly-chlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), pesticides, and heavy metals. The U.S. Air Force has been conducting an environmental cleanup program there since 1983.

In 1990, the base was added to EPA's Superfund National Priorities List (NPL). In 1991, the Air Force, EPA, and the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (MEDEP) signed a Federal Facilities Agreement establishing the protocols for conducting the cleanup of Loring Air Force Base. To speed the cleanup, the Air Force organized 53 sites into 15 operable units based on geographic location, groundwater properties, and geologic units.

The base was closed in September 1994 by the Secretary of Defense's Commission on Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC). Because of the low levels of contamination in the soil, the BRAC Cleanup Team—consisting of EPA, the Air Force, and the MEDEP remedial project managers—decided it was safe to use as fill to cap two landfills on the site. This approach was expanded to include any contaminated soils from the operable units. The cleanup team decided to delay the final capping of one landfill to accommodate 150,000 cubic yards from one of the operable units, including 2.5 miles of stream and wetlands remediation. The cleanup team faced additional challenges, such as identifying the delineation of the groundwater plumes. This effort was complicated by the fractured rock geology, distribution of contamination sources across the 9,000-acre base, and the long history of military operations.

During the removal/remedial actions at Loring, contaminated soil and sediments were removed from flood plains and streams. About one million cubic yards of contaminated soil were excavated from around the base and consolidated in landfills, which were investigated under the Air Force's Installation Restoration Program as required by Superfund. The Air Force also removed and/or evaluated underground storage tanks, trenches, and buildings for radioactive contamination. In addition, the Air Force restored 51.49 acres of wetlands, and the area will be monitored for five years to ensure the success of the restoration efforts. All remedial construction activities were completed in March 2001.

truction Completion List

With remedial construction activities completed at Loring AFB, a cleaner environment at this northern New England site is now available to the local community, the Loring Development Authority, and the abundant native wildlife, such as the moose pictured above.

"Out-of-the-box thinking on the part of the cleanup team has expedited the successful cleanup and redevelopment of Loring Air Force Base and has resulted in significant cost savings," says Mike Daly, remedial project manager at Loring AFB. "EPA looks forward to continuing our strong partnership with the MEDEP and the Air Force to accelerate the transfer of property still retained by the Air Force and to optimize environmental restoration efforts currently under way so that these sites can be closed out in a timely and cost-effective manner."

The Air Force has continued environmental restoration efforts since the base was closed in 1994 and has transferred most of the former base to the Loring Development Authority via a 55-year long-term lease in anticipation of an eventual full transfer. Loring also hosts several employers, such as SITEL (a telemarketing firm), the Defense Finance Accounting Service, a Department of Labor Job Corps facility, and the Maine Air National Guard.

Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland

The Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG) is an active 72,500-acre Army installation located in southern Harford County and southeastern Baltimore County, Maryland, near the head of Chesapeake Bay. The site is bordered by residential areas to the north and a power plant and state park to the west and is intersected by the Bush River.

In 1981, the Harford County Department of Health inspected the site and recommended capping the landfill with two feet of relatively impermeable material and covering the cap with topsoil. The effort failed to function properly, and the Army later discovered the presence of hazardous chemicals—including lead, mercury, cadmium, and benzene—in groundwater on the landfill. The landfill was placed on EPA's National Priorities List in 1989. After observing leachate outbreaks in 1991, EPA installed temporary collection drains until a new cap could be put in place.

In 1992, the EPA Administrator signed a Record of Decision (ROD) that proposed installing a multilayered cap system as recommended by the Maryland Department of the Environment. In addition, the temporary collection system was removed and replaced by a new drainage system. Installation of the landfill cap system was completed in 1994. Risks posed by the landfill include potential exposure to and/or transport of contaminants that might be associated with surface water runoff or surface water infiltration and subsequent leachate generation. Maintenance activities include routine mowing and inspection of the cap and drainage system.

In 1997, the EPA Administrator signed the ROD for groundwater at the site. The ROD identified a potential risk from drinking water, and installing drinking water wells within a quarter-mile perimeter of the landfill cap is prohibited. APG notifies Maryland and EPA annually that this restriction is still being enforced. Groundwater, surface water, and sediment are monitored bianually. In addition, the well installation restrictions would be included in any real property documents in the event that the Army sells the property.

Because the local community expressed interest in regard to the groundwater contamination at APG, the community relations staff implemented an active outreach campaign. To keep the community informed of remedial activities and groundwater monitoring results at the site, APG's community relations staff held public meetings, distributed fact sheets, and offered site tours. "A lot of work was done with participation from the community," says Steve Hirsh, remedial project manager at APG. "Due to high public interest, we worked to ensure that the community's role in the remedial activities would not be diminished by site completion."

The APG site was placed on the construction completion list in June 2001. In accordance with Superfund requirements, a five-year review will be conducted at this site, and the final report will be completed by June 2002. PIP

The Power of One

<Continued From Page 1>

the government agencies' sensitivity to community concerns." Nehring received the citizen's award from EPA's Office of Emergency and Remedial Response, and was honored with a plaque at the 2001 Community Involvement Conference in San Antonio, Texas.

A 9,400-acre former Army base, Fort Devens lies 35 miles west of Boston, and is surrounded by the towns of Ayer, Shirley, Lancaster, and Harvard. In 1917, Fort Devens was established as a temporary training camp for Army soldiers during World War I and converted to a permanent base in 1931. The base operated for more than 60 years, hosting a variety of military activities until its closure in 1996, when the land was transferred back to local communities for public and private use.

The years of military activity left many contaminated areas, and Fort Devens was placed on EPA's Superfund National Priorities List in 1989. More than 80 sites of potentially hazardous soil and groundwater contamination were identified, and a partnership involving EPA, the Department of Defense (DoD), the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, and local governments was formed to clean up the site and develop a plan for its reuse. Adding to environmental concerns is fact that Fort Devens lies only two miles from 3,500 households and is intersected by the Nashua River, an important resource for the area.

In 1997, members of People of Ayer Concerned About the Environment (PACE) faced a difficult situation. Not only had activities at Fort Devens left environmental damage, but its recent closure had also left a gaping hole in the local economy. PACE members, like their fellow Ayer residents, were preoccupied with the serious financial ramifications of the base's shutdown, but had not utilized an EPA Technical Assistance Grant received in the early 1990s to address concerns about contamination at Fort Devens. Without quick action, the group was in danger of losing the $50,000 grant—a vital asset in informing the community and affecting environmental cleanup issues.

At the same time, Laurie Nehring, who was new to Ayer, was looking for a way to connect with her community. With an undergraduate degree in environmental science and experience as an environmental librarian, Nehring thought PACE would be a perfect fit. A stay-at-home mom with a new daughter, Nehring devoted her extra time to investigating what PACE had to do to save the grant, and she began implementing those actions. "Laurie was able to step in and get the group together," says Jim Murphy, EPA's community involvement coordinator. "She put in the effort to utilize and maintain the EPA grant, which PACE used to hire a very competent consultant who was able to provide valuable technical insight."

Backed by thorough technical research, Nehring and PACE began speaking out on remediation decisions, bringing a whole new perspective to the table. As part of

<Continued on Page 9>

ASTSWMO Hosts Federal Facility Managers

In 2001, the Association of State and Territorial Solid Waste Management Officials (ASTSWMO) hosted the first-ever Federal Facility Managers Symposium in Florida. The symposium, held from August 20 to 22, focused on a variety of issues from institutional controls and environmental justice to Formerly Used Defense Sites and cleanup of military ordnance ranges.

Representatives from states, EPA, the U.S. Department of Energy, the U.S. Department of Defense, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers attended the event. The primary goals of the symposium were to give participants an opportunity to share information with peers from different agencies and to update association members on policy changes and other news. It also aimed to improve communication between states and federal agencies in order to provide efficient cleanup efforts of federal facilities.

The symposium offered participants numerous sessions on issues such as the partnering process, technology and information management, property transfer and privatization, and funding, liability, and insurance issues associated with site closeout. It also served to showcase the various work products (e.g., surveys) developed by ASTSWMO's federal facilities subcommittee.

For more information, contact Dania Rodriguez of ASTSWMO at 202 624-5973 or <daniar@sso.org>. PIP

Award winner Laurie Nehring with Suzanne Wells of EPA's Office of Emergency and Remedial Response.

one major contribution, Nehring and PACE succeeded in changing DoD's initial plan to create a major landfill out of six existing ones on a section of the Fort Devens site near the downtown area of Ayer. By investigating the potential risks, informing the public, and mobilizing local congressmen, state senators, and other elected officials, Nehring and PACE worked with EPA and DoD to re-evaluate the proposed landfill consolidation.

"Laurie helped PACE members position themselves as key players in the process, not just as critics," says Murphy. "They not only presented reasonable, well-supported concerns, but they also helped to devise realistic alternatives that would satisfy all parties involved."

When DoD began looking for a new site for the landfill, Nehring and PACE sustained their involvement, meeting frequently with officials to review the pros and cons of other siting options. According to Nehring, understanding DoD's perspective and trying to be balanced were crucial to success. The new landfill, which will feature state-of-the-art leak protection technology, is now under construction at a location that poses little risk to Ayer residents or the surrounding environment.

Byrne, along with Murphy and Carol Keating (Fort Devens' remedial project manager since 1999), nominated Nehring for the award. According to Byrne, "This is an impressive award for citizens. It shows that they are important in the Superfund process and sheds light on their achievements, providing an excellent example for other communities." The award won valuable media attention for PACE and its efforts, and it bolstered the group's image as a well-respected contributor to the Fort Devens cleanup. As for Nehring, the award inspired her to continue her work to protect Ayer's environmental interests. PACE has already received a renewal of the EPA technical assistance grant and has shifted its focus to new topics, such as the condition and maintenance of one of Fort Devens' largest existing landfills.

Looking back over her five years of work with PACE, Nehring can offer other concerned citizens valuable advice. "Remember that you are going to have ups and downs in your efforts. No matter how hard it gets, don't forget that there are always other people out there, facing similar issues, who believe in your cause." PIP

Upcoming Events

2002 National Community Involvement Conference

<www.epancic.org/2002>

Where: Portland, Oregon

When: June 25 to 28, 2002

This dynamic conference brings together public participation and community involvement professionals from across all EPA programs, as well as their federal, tribal, state, and local partners. Conference presentations are designed to emphasize the process of public participation and community involvement by focusing on techniques and approaches used in EPA's national and regional programs.

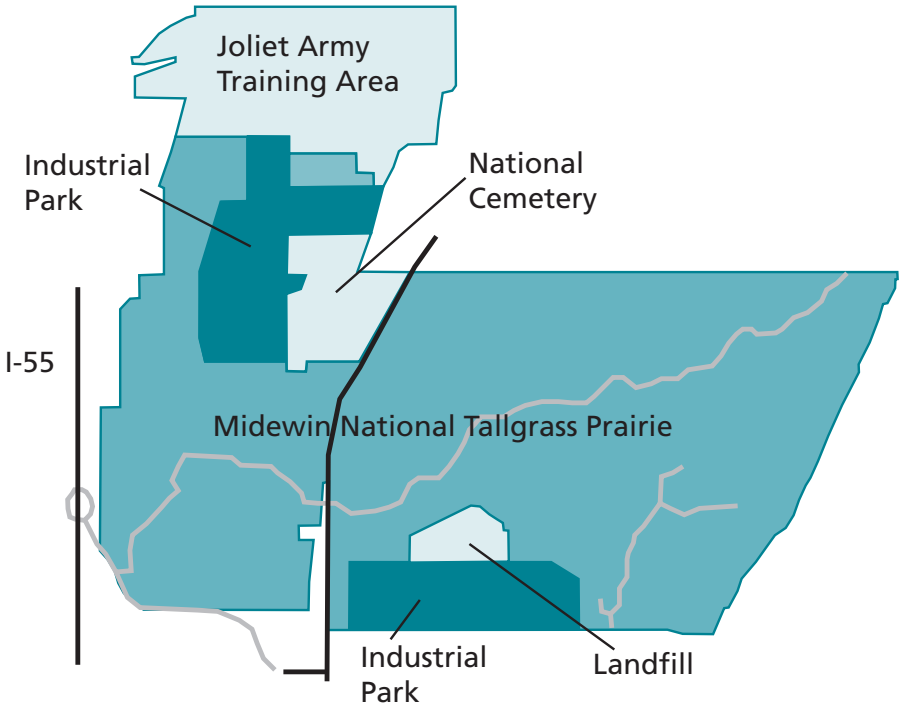
Facilitating Progress

<Continued From Page 2>

the load-assembly-packing area in 1989. Soil at the two sites was mostly contaminated with explosives and heavy metals, and a number of groundwater plumes were contaminated with explosives, metals, and volatile organic compounds. The U.S. Army decided to combine the sites and turn them into an industrial park, so it began conducting research to establish appropriate cleanup levels and issue a Record of Decision (ROD).

In 1995, Illinois established the *Land Conservation Act* and designated 19,000 acres of the Joliet site for inclusion in the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie. "When fully restored, Midewin will be the largest section of native tallgrass prairie east of the Mississippi," says Steve Davis of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. In 1997, the Army transferred 15,000 acres of the site to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) Forest Service. Another 4,000 acres will be transferred once they are cleaned. An additional 5,000 acres of the Joliet site were designated to become a municipal landfill for Will County, a National Veterans Cemetery, and two industrial parks for the nearby cities of Wilmington and Elwood.

In 1998, EPA, the Army, and the Forest Service were working together to finalize the ROD for the two sites.



Map of proposed future uses for the Joliet site.

When overseers at the USDA read a draft of the ROD, they realized that the cleanup levels being established were based on data from the Army's research done prior to the *Land Conservation Act* and did not consider the land's new future use. The USDA became concerned that the cleanup levels set in the draft ROD might not adequately protect the site's ecological resources and asked EPA not to sign it until more appropriate levels were established. The Army, however, felt it was too late to make changes and stood by the levels set in the draft ROD.

With neither agency able to reach an agreement, cleanup procedures at Joliet came to a standstill. In September 1998, EPA hired a facilitator to help reestablish communication. Laurel Boucher, a contractor with a Maryland-based firm, began by meeting with key management personnel to help them identify their individual and common goals for the cleanup. She helped the group decide on a short-term solution in which EPA would sign the existing ROD with the condition that the cleanup levels would only be interim figures and a final plan would be established by 2002.

Boucher first encouraged the group to designate representatives from the management staff of each involved party who would develop the final

<Continued on Page 11>

Cleanup activities at federal facilities across the country are making thousands of acres suitable for redevelopment as well as restoring natural areas such as wetlands and prairies.

plan. Once this management group had been created, it appointed two technical workgroups, one on human health and one on ecological health, comprised of representatives from each party. The workgroups met once each month with the facilitator to discuss the cleanup levels needed to address each topic of concern.

Boucher did not participate in the technical discussions. Instead, she came to meetings to provide the groups with team-building activities and conflict resolution training. From the start, she helped the group reach decisions on every aspect of their meetings, including the agenda, the schedule, and various operating procedures. She even asked the group to agree on the roles of a facilitator and to rotate some of these roles among themselves so she could separate herself from the technical discussions and be seen as an unbiased mediator.

According to Dr. Mark Tumeo, a USDA contactor assigned to Joliet, the facilitator not only reinitiated talks, but also helped the involved agencies develop better long-term relationships for resolving conflict. "We still might not see eye-to-eye, but at least she helped us deal with our issues in an effective and cooperative manner," he says.

"Our meetings prior to hiring the facilitator were very contentious," says Diana Mally of EPA's Region 5 office in Chicago. "We simply were not making any progress." Now, although final cleanup levels are still being determined, Mally is optimistic that a fair agreement will be reached. "The real success is that we are once again able to talk," she says.

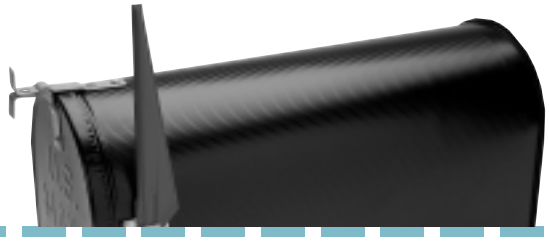
Three months after their formation, the workgroups presented the management group with their collected data on cleanup needs at Joliet. Since then, the management group has been reviewing the data and meeting with the facilitator to reach consensus on a final plan. Once a final plan is proposed, it will be evaluated by a feasability specialist before moving to closure. PIP

Write To Us

We encourage your questions, comments, and contributions. Please send your input to Dianna Young by mail at U.S. EPA/FFRRO, Mailcode: 5106, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20460; e-mail at <young.dianna@epa.gov>; or fax at 202 260-5646.

Join Our Mailing List

If you would like to be on the FFRRO mailing list to receive future issues of *Partners In Progress*, please fill out and return this form to the address above.



Name: _____

Agency/Organization: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone Number: _____

E-mail: _____

ICMA Passes on a Legacy of Information on Military Base Reuse

Individuals involved in military base closure and reuse participated in a workshop in August 2001 to record their accumulated experiences for future reference. The International City/County Management Association (ICMA) co-hosted the workshop with the city of Aurora, Colorado. Approximately 45 attendees participated in discussion groups covering topics such as planning for reuse, environmental remediation, community involvement, property transfer, land-use controls, and recommendations on the process of future base closure rounds. Participants also toured two former military sites—Lowry Air Force Base and Fitzsimons Army Hospital—that are being converted for residential, commercial, and community use.

The idea for the workshop was based on discussions ICMA's Military Base Reuse Consortium had with local government officials and others. Additional base closures have been discussed for several years and several pieces of legislation have been introduced to allow for more Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) rounds, including the recent Department of Defense Efficient Facilities Initiative.

"The goal of the workshop was to gather a small group of people with a wide variety of experience in a relaxed, academic setting," says Jacen McMillen of ICMA. "People were able to speak candidly about the issues, and we received a lot of positive and beneficial feedback."

Results of the workshop are intended to help local governments face the challenges and opportunities created by possible future base closures. Information from the workshop will be organized, condensed, and published as a report to supplement ICMA's upcoming *Base Reuse Handbook, 2nd Edition*.

For more information, contact Jacen McMillen of ICMA at 202 962-3596. PIP

Federal Facilities
Restoration and Reuse Office

Official Business
Penalty for Private Use $300

United States
Environmental Protection Agency
(5106)
Washington, DC 20460

EPA

First Class Mail
Postage and Fees Paid
EPA
G-35